

## Public Comments on G14-03-84-G01 Ground Operations – Plumas County

Recreation Outdoors Coalition requests clarification on several points in the application for the Plumas County Ground Operations Mt. Hough Trails project.

The mileage that has been accomplished and the amount of money has been spent on this project to date is extremely high. According to prior grant applications:

2011/2012 Grant Total \$471,253  
Development 30.1 miles @ \$9361/mi = \$281,773  
Ground Ops 55.2 miles @ \$3433/mi = \$189,480

2012/2013 Grant Total \$237,462  
Development 10.2 miles @ \$12,820/mi = \$130,762  
Ground Ops 20.8 miles @ \$ 5130/mi = \$106,700

2013/2014 Grant Total \$527,158  
Development 18.56 miles @ \$19,178/mi = \$355,936  
Ground Ops 9.67 miles @ \$17,707/mi = \$171,222

2014/2015 Grant Request Total \$262,371  
Ground Ops 21 miles @ \$12,494/mi = \$262,371

Since 2012, and including the most recent 2015 application, this is a total of \$1,498,244 in grant funding for the project. These costs are excessive. The request of \$12,494 per mile for routes that have already been maintained in the last 1-2 years is extremely high, especially considering these have been drought years so there should be very little erosion. The claim in the budget that these trails require heavy maintenance is not true. These costs are not consistent with those in similar areas in California.

Considering just the last two years work, the claimed mileage is 49.23 miles. However there are only 35 miles in the Mt. Hough Trail System. The mileage and corresponding dollars are not accurate.

ROC is also concerned with the equipment purchase that is requested in the 2014/2015 grant application. Plumas Co. Facilities Dept. is requesting a side by side, a trailer, two quads, and three electric winches. This is in addition to the side by side that Plumas Co. Public Works bought last year and an additional side by side Public Works is requesting this year. The Plumas Co. Sheriff's Dept. purchased a side by side last year with OHV funds. Together the three County Departments have purchased or proposed to purchase four side by sides with OHV funds in the last two years. The Public Works Department has justified their purchase. However, the public expects the departments to share equipment, the same as other agencies and private businesses do. Please justify this costly purchase,

particularly since all of the 21 miles of trails in this project are single track or quad trails, which cannot even accommodate side by sides.

According to the grant application, Plumas County Facilities will be giving this equipment to the Mt. Hough Trails contractor's crew for their work, to the Forest Service for soil monitoring, for transporting volunteers, and for putting on OHV workshops for the public. The cost estimate for this project also includes rental of two motorcycles and a trailer. Please justify why a side by side with a winch, two ATVs with winches, an ATV cart, a trailer, and two motorcycles are required to accomplish work on this project.

The proposed equipment purchases raise several questions including:

- Who will retain ownership of the equipment?
- Is it legal for the contractor and volunteers to use County equipment in the performance of the contract?
- Who will pay for damage and repairs?
- Who will accept liability when transporting volunteers and contractors, and for the public at the OHV workshops?
- Where will equipment be stored during the duration of the contract?
- Who takes responsibility for the equipment when the Forest Service uses the equipment for soil monitoring?

Budget:

Staff line item 2 has the County project coordinator cost at \$737/day. Is this accurate? (equivalent to \$176,880/yr.)

Staff line item 5 says Sierra Cycles is a motorcycle shop. This is not true. It is a mountain bike shop. Sierra Cycle, a similar named business in East Quincy, is a motorcycle shop but is not the business who is offering volunteers.

Contracts line item 1 is excessive and needs to be reduced.

Evaluation Criteria:

Item 6 – Please provide specific information to support the claims that site design precludes the need for protecting special status species and the need for sanitary facilities.

Item 8 – These narrow trails cannot be used by snowmobiles, and the design width and clearing specs do not meet Forest Service specs for equestrians.

The application contains no photos, mileposts, or any other information to identify where the work is needed. So it's impossible to give detailed comments on this project.